

# THE STUMBLING STONE.

VOL. 4

Whitehouse, Lucas Co., Ohio.

JUNE, 1875.

NO. 12

The Law constitutes one a subscriber who requests the paper, and for whom some one engages to pay expense. With the help of voluntary contributions I engage to pay for and send the paper free to all actual subscribers who send their names for the paper. The law requires me to pay postage at transient rates to all who are not subscribers which adds greatly to the expense.

The paper will be likely to be discontinued to those from which it did not hear at first month.

Designated to be published monthly.

No. 12 was issued.

If any desire more papers please specify the number. Contributions cheerfully given for this work will be accepted as from the Lord. LYMAN H. JOHNSON. WHITEHOUSE Lucas Co. OHIO

There is no money order office nearer than Maumee, 9 miles. Except large amounts, send the money, or registered letters, as you please.

## Has God any Ministers on Earth?

There is abundance of sect ministers who preach for societies, and hire out their services to men by the year, or engage them for life. They are falsely called God's ministers. But a servant or minister cannot have two masters. God's minister is one who acts only as God's agent among men, and preaches what and where and to whom he is convinced God would have him, and considers only God's Will, independent of the wishes of all men.

Where is there such a minister whose preaching and appointments and whole gospel work is regardless of such authority, and only governed by convictions of God's will? Again where is there a man whom the people regard as God's true agent representative independent of them, so that they are under obligation to him simply as God's representatives?

The very suggestion of this idea is treated as the wildest absurdity in our times. And all so-called ministers are received or dismissed just as horse jockeys, life or trade horses, or merchants their clerks. There never was an age of such profound infidelity as this.

But God has a true ministry today, as he did in Bible times, and they are treated with greater contempt than then, and yet every such minister as if God himself were among men, and every faithful house or city where such ministers go will find it more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for them if they do not hear and receive such ministers.

An endless hell is the certain doom of every one who lives not a true and unassailable of the great God, though he be an unlettered fisherman or mechanic.

The same is true of every Christian, since he is God's representative to the full extent of his call to gospel work.

## Camp-meetings and Revivals. Happiness, not Truth or Righteousness, the End!

Mark the holiness and revival meetings of these times! Pleasure, not truth or righteousness is the end.

Camp-meetings are now the great channel of religious pleasure seeking and idolatry. Getting happy or getting blessed is the end and the criterion of success at all the meetings.

Bible truth, exposing sect and mammon idolatry would make all such meetings like a hornet's nest when a stone is thrown into it. From now till fall frosts, grave and camp-meetings will glow with this sensuality of a deluded people, who come together for sensual-religious enjoyment and the baptism of the god of this world, till they are full of religion but hatred of the simple truth as it is in Jesus. "They will not endure sound doctrine." Touch their sect idol, or love of money or carnality and they will bristle like a rebel camp with bayonets against the God they hate and his Son Jesus Christ whom they would crucify with a hundred times the fury of the old Jews.

## Shall We Let Our Light be seen?

Those are false teachers who make Christ's commands conflict with his practice, and with other Scripture.

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick and it giveth light to all that are in the house. Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.

This beginning of Christ's sermon and teaching of his church, declares the central fact and law of its visibility, and no teaching which follows, nor any sophistry of Satan can be plead against it, nor in favor of any invisible religion, or invisible church, or invisible virtue in this world. The lie of sectarianism and of Babylon, that the church without man's organism, without steepled sanctuaries and carnal rites is invisible is forever nailed by these words of Jesus. If Jesus tells the truth, there is no invisible church, nor invisible religion in this world. It is only works of darkness which seek the dark and do not come to the light. It is only those who are ashamed of Jesus who do not confess him and call upon his name before men.

Matthew 6, 1-7, against alms and prayer, like hypocrites, to be seen of men, is a qualification of, but not a contradiction of the command to let our light

so shine before men that they seeing our good works shall glorify our Father, or to not be ashamed of him before men.

John 11, 42, gives an example and sign for public prayer. "Because of the people which stood by I said it, that they might believe."

To say that alms and prayer, the two chief expressions of a holy heart, the law of love to God and man, are to be covered up, is to say that Jesus lied when he uttered the words of the text Matt. 14-16. If public prayer is hypocrisy or a mockery and sin as it must be if not a duty, then Jesus, and his apostles, and Daniel who prayed three times a day publicly, and all other Scripture worthies were false, vain, immodest, ostentatious, and are not to be trusted as examples and teachers of righteousness.

If alms and prayer are positively to be secret, then those converted at the Pentecost and published to the world as having given away their property and Zacheus for publishing his giving half his goods, and the Widow for letting others see her two mites, were all mistaken souls, to be condemned for their hypocrisy.

If alms and prayer are positively to be secret, since these represent all virtue toward man and all faith toward God, all the light there is in Christ's church, then Jesus squarely contradicts himself in the same sermon and forbids to let our light shine, that requires us to put it under a bushel, and denies that the church is the light of the world. "Them of course Babylon teachers are right in saying that the church of Jesus is invisible except by man's organism and tall steeples."

Of God, have mercy on poor deluded souls who live in this trap of the devil, and who make a monstrous parade of the humility of covering up their light of prayer and alms! God save his church from all such absurdity and palpable alms. This lie of modern infidelity which makes a hypocritical parade of its secrecy of virtue, which is the general characteristic of the sceptical world and of all the false, is only another shift of the devil and of the hypocrisy which Jesus condemns in Matt. 6, 1-7.

It does not contradict itself but only condemns that prayer and alms are to be covered up, that is false. It is not the visible gold but the visible counterfeit he condemns. It is only the pretense of alms and prayer which has only the eye and the favor of men he condemns. Never does he condemn any honest and true act of worship or of love before men! Where the life corresponds and proves the sincerity Christ commands publicity. If we have got light we must let it shine! If not we had better go to our closets instead of acting the hypocrite. He commands against deceiving by coin that is false and seeks only the eye of man.

But I do not understand Jesus as opposed publicity of religion and righteousness. Neither does any other man, except he is deluded of the devil, or desires to have the credit of a piety which the world cannot see, and which he does not possess. If there is any lie of the devil more palpable than another it is this when men pretend to any virtue, which cannot be seen, and especially make a virtue of its invisibility, and then parade this virtue of their modesty!

It is straining beyond the ordinary stretch of vanity. If they never made any pretense to any invisible virtue, then we might suppose that they possessed at least the absence of ostentation, if not, the absence of the virtue itself. But when they make a parade of the virtue of hiding their virtue or light under a bushel, the proof is conclusive that the whole thing is a sham.

The only course of honesty is to let our acts of virtue testify for us. If we have religion or love to man let acts prove it, and not a pretence, the proof of which the world cannot see.

But by no means does Jesus teach that false humility, the very heart and core of pharisaism which parades the virtue of secrecy, and glories in the invisibility of its virtue, and makes this a cloak for its shame of Christ, and his religion before men.

The sermon on the mount teaches without contradiction the visibility of religion and all virtue, and that by this the world shall see and know, the children of God.

When the children of God cease visible prayer and alms, they do cease all visible distinction from the world, their light goes out. I never knew one to live a life of love to God after family and social prayer was discontinued. I have known multitudes to backslide right at this point. I have also known multitudes to be saved in Christ the moment they

began to pray publicly. And I do know that it is just as impossible for one to be a Christian without social or visible prayer as to be a Christian without visible honesty or any other visible virtue. For they lack the first positive proof of love to God.

## The Grasshoppers and Prayer.

The governor of Missouri has appointed a day of fasting and prayer for the grasshoppers. It is interesting to see any recognition of God in his judgments on the land. But the prophet Isaiah describes the fasts of Israel: "Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul and thou takest no knowledge? Behold in the day of your fast ye find pleasure and, exact all your labors. Behold ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. Ye shall not fast as ye do this day to make your voice to be heard on high."

If the people would break off their sins, put away all dangerous sects, and all man made churches and institutions of religion not ordained of God. All the pride and covetousness which marks so-called churches, and with united heart seek for the old paths of Bible religion and separation from the world, then their fasts and prayers would be accepted and not be a mockery and provocation of God as they now are.

The people have had too much and too long prosperity. My prayer is that God will break up the reigning infidelity of the church and the world, until all hireling priests are driven from their livings, and the churches return to the unity simplicity and spirituality of primitive faith, and that God's judgments will continue till this is done.

If there is no hope of any such repentance and reformation and return to the old faith advocated by this Stumblingstone, my prayer to God is that he will finish his work speedily, and when the last soul is converted to this despised faith, let the fires of the last day come, and on the ashes of the devil's kingdom and of righteousness begin. I am sick of the loathsome infidelity that reigns around me everywhere and shall hail with joy the swift approaching end when God who is now mocked and defied shall assert his rightful sway and crush forever this world's horrible rebellion.

I would a thousand times prefer to see grasshoppers cover our fields and gardens a foot deep, than to see and hear the infidelity, profanity and mockery of God which salutes my eyes and ears every day in these professedly Christian communities. I could rejoice to see the extinguishing scourge of Almighty God in any form take the place of the mockery of false churches, and the ribald mirth and profanity and unrestrained sensuality of the devil's children.

Grasshoppers or potatoe bugs or famine or sword are no terror to God's children, for their possessions and treasures are beyond these liabilities. These only fear and trouble idolaters and lovers of this world whose treasures are all here and who will perish with them.

## LETTERS FROM BROTHERS.

Blackington, Mass. May 23.

Dear Brother and Sister Johnson: I am happy in God. I have been reading "I receive not honor of men." O how plain is the precious word of God! It is a wonder to me that the thoughts of the ministers are not arrested when they read such a passage. They estimate their worth by the salaries they receive.

The last sermon I heard had some truth. It was from this text: "This is the victory that overcometh the world even your faith." The preacher said he did not think there was one in a thousand of professors who had this faith. But before he closed he encouraged the people to look for the millennium, as the world was getting better. As I have no Dr. bill to pay, nor slip rent, nor ministers donation, nor lottery tickets, the Lord says I might send my postage, so inclosed with a hearty prayer that God will bless you by helping you to stand by the truth though it cost you all. My motto is no compromise, down with treason! I have no time to tell you of every the latest fight. But suffice it to say the majority was on my side, the Great I Am.

The hell is ringing to go to work. Give my love, and of my family to all the saints. John Owen.

Randolph Center, Broom Co. N. Y.

Dear Brother and Sister Johnson. We have greatly desired to see you in the flesh, but don't know as we ever shall, although you seem to be drawing this way, and if the world stands long enough you may get here. But we are glad to hear from you through the Stumblingstone. Our number keeps getting less, and to hear the voice of the people outside.

Continued on 23 page.

Note this that I have never said aught against secret or silent prayer, without which a soul cannot live, but that I am driving at that false plea of all the infidel world, especially modern spiritualism which under the mask of pretended secret prayer opposes real vocal prayer.

God is not in need of loudness nor our petitions at all, but he has made us to talk with him as one who HEARS AND ANSWERS OUR LITERAL CRIES. I cannot ignore the order of God which his word reveals nor can any child of his be silent when his father is waiting to hear his voice.

Set aside visible prayer, and the whole Spiritualist and infidel world are one with us outside the tents; no bars separate.

## Human and Divine order in Religion.

There is no subject on which Satan more commonly confuses and ensnares true saints than in regard to the order of man's wisdom and of the Holy Spirit in religious duty and worship. I will mention some of the fatal errors and delusions which have prevailed. The most common and universal delusion is that formalism, which cuts off liberty of the spirit, and makes every meeting a regular routine of exercises prescribed, stereotyped, and controlled by man, according to worldly wisdom so that no child of God outside of this order has any liberty to speak or act for God. If God moves a man to speak he must hold his peace unless he happens to be the one appointed by men to speak or pray.

No matter though a prophet of God is burdened with burning messages of reproof or warning he must be silent or it will disturb man's order. Thus God is banished from all so called churches by a system which excludes the liberty of his Spirit this is the popular and the most fatal of all delusions. It is necessary to secure peace and build up man made churches that the gospel fan be excluded. No sect church could exist where liberty was given the gospel fan. It would distract and break up every carnal and sectarian meeting. A necessary result of this supremacy of man's order, is that all worship becomes hypocrisy and mockery of God.

In exactly the opposite direction there is another delusion of the devil by which only true pilgrims are likely to be endangered, and by which many have been lead captive. In past numbers of the Stumblingstone I have called attention to it, especially as it prevailed in central Illinois, and also in Lena and among the "Discerners" by whom I was deceived and temporarily overcome three years ago.

I feel it my duty to fully and carefully state the nature and tendency of this error for the protection of pilgrims who are especially exposed in these last days.

In getting away from formalism and hypocrisy, the error consists in setting aside all reason and judgment in regard to religious duty and worship and a dependence on spiritual impressions and revelations and leadings, doing nothing except as they have some special moving of the Spirit as they suppose. In this way the widest range for fancy and the wildest imagination is thrown open. Thus fanaticism comes in, and all the lying spirits of the pit have a chance to lead and control the child of God. A ship broke loose from its moorings, spurning chart or compass, accepting any and every wind that blows as from God is as sure of destruction, as if it steered straight for the rocks and shoals.

This sort of faith is precisely the same as the devil tempted Jesus to exercise by throwing himself off the pinnacle of the temple.

The Scriptural teaching that we have the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all we do, and that we are to speak as the oracles of God, or of the ability which God gives us that he may have all the glory is perverted to mean that we are to be governed by supernatural impressions and extraordinary revelations so as to set aside the natural use of our reason and judgment in religious worship. This is a fatal mistake, and a trap of Satan in which he has gained immense advantage over many true pilgrims. Spiritual pride is the foundation of this error. I want to say to all who are exposed to this peril, that no feelings, impressions, leadings or dreams or any inward movings are ever to be trusted except so far as our knowledge of God's word, and of his truth, and facts which all God's children can see, correspond to and confirm such impressions. Writers of the Bible and inspired men of old were never in an unnatural or trance state, in penning the revelations of God like modern Spiritualist mediums. God's spirit does not work by ecstasies and mental transports which set aside natural and healthy mental action and reason. It is only witches, wizards, neeromancers and magicians who go off into unnatural mental states and supernatural exercises. Satan only works by such conditions, because he cannot work successfully until conscience, judgment, knowledge are all set aside, and he takes the reins of the soul in his own hands. I see no evidence in

Scripture that God works in this way. But on the contrary, the Holy Spirit makes all our powers of mind more active and regular and healthy than before it enters. Even when the prophets foretold future events they were in the full possession of their natural faculties, and wrote the revelations of God as freely as any child of God writes a gospel message now.

There has been immense confusion on the subject of inspiration and spirit leadings caused by priest craft and also by spiritual pride. I know not which is the most dangerous, the exalting of man's wisdom in religious matters, or the self exalting claim to divine revelations and leadings which supersede the use of the natural reason and judgment. Both errors are of the devil and utterly fatal. I can testify on both sides from terrible experience. It was the last error however which brought the only occasion of reproach of my life. The former error that I was in, would secure my reputation with the world and hence is the most dangerous of the two.

But I must particularize on this subject that I be not misunderstood. Excess of religious joy or sorrow, even so as to prostrate the body is not unreasonable nor contrary to sound judgment, nor do I mean this when I speak of supernatural states and delusions. It is natural for persons to be overwhelmed with feeling under conviction of the truth by the Spirit of God, and any and all natural expressions of that feeling is warranted by sound judgment. The Spirit of God is not opposed to the fullest liberty of the soul in every thing that is right and pure.

But I mean now all impressions, leadings and movings which are strange, unaccountable, or absurd, or which are contrary to the truth or to the requirements of Scripture and sound judgment are of the devil or the infirmity of the flesh, and are not to be trusted. The very moment one ventures beyond plain facts, or Scripture, and reason, following only some inward impulse without any other ground of conviction, he becomes a fanatic and is sure to be tripped up by the devil. Satan has full advantage of every such soul. The chart, compass, and rudder set aside, God's appointed means, Satan is thereby invited to take the helm and entire control and he is sure to neglect no such chance. Faith in God uses his appointed means. Presumption, through pride ventures without regard to God's conditions and makes certain shipwreck. I mean all I say on this subject. I was driven on the very brink of the pit once by this mistake or by misplaced confidence in those who were in this error. This is the whole explanation of that one mysterious experience which my enemies are now lying about to my injury all over the land. For example: certain brethren and sisters during a meeting would have an impression that some lying spirit was present and then perhaps would single out some one as the person, possessed and would fill all the brethren with terror by their screams and warnings as if from God. Instead of taking the Bible rule of pointing out sin, as Peter pointed out the sin of Ananias or of Simon Magus, or proving by the fruits that such person was wrong, they went altogether by divine impressions and revelations (so called) placing the case entirely beyond the judgment or the decision of the church, constituting these discerners the Lord's and Gods of Israel. This wild fanaticism, so contrary to Scripture was what proved more disastrous to the cause of God in Ill., and Iowa, Michigan and Ohio, than any other hindrance. In Lena, and Steverson Co. Whiteside Co. Winchester, Arcola, and Bangor Iowa, Benton Mich. Coneaut O. the whole church was and is desolated and almost extinguished by this fanaticism. While many are yet in delusion by this spirit leading and discerning, most of the others have gone back into the sects or into the world and to the devil by the terror and disgust which this work of Satan produced.

In regard to prayer and all religious worship this error was manifest in general disorder, and also preventing prayer altogether in many instances. The tendency was to wait for the Spirit to specially impress the feeling before any duty would be performed.

Taking some inward drawing and moving to be from God, they make this a standard, and test of duty, instead of the ordinary means, a knowledge of the facts and of the truth and the plain necessities of life. This is inviting the guidance of Satan, and venturing blindly, to jump off the temple and trust God. It is rejecting chart and compass, and taking every wind as a divine guide.

If these fanatics were as great fools in regard to the body as they are concerning the soul, they would

not one of them live six weeks. If concerning food, and health, they did not consult reason and the necessities of life, and adopt a course which sound judgement dictates, if they ate their meals not regularly but by inward impressions, if in regard to the kind of food, or medicine, or exposure of person to rain or cold, they did not consider what is best and wisest, and what the laws of God require, but were governed by blind impulses, and impressions it would be certain death in a short time. This is precisely what this fanaticism does in regard to the soul. They pray and perform religious duty by impressions and inward movings, and not by a knowledge of the facts of the soul's wants, its daily necessities, its health, evidences of sin and alienation from God, and convictions based on a knowledge of the Scriptures, and visible wants. So they go without literal prayer and other religious duty, rebuking sin, warning men etc. because they have not the feeling or impression that way, hence they die because of this blind presumption.

The duty of prayer depends not more on inward leadings and impressions than the duty of eating regular meals, or suitable food, taking needful remedies, or clothing and shelter or paying our honest debts. God has made it our duty to look at facts, and act accordingly, whether we feel like it or not.

In regard to prayer and all religious duty, the general rule of safety is to go contrary to all inward feelings and impressions. This at least would be safer than the opposite course, because the flesh and the devil always make us feel averse to duty, and hence there is a cross to take in every important duty, especially when the soul is in greatest danger.

Nothing could be more perilous than to yield to any inward aversion to duty, or to wait for special movings. This is all that Satan wants of any saint to make sure of his soul. It would entirely set aside the cross. Never is there greater heed of prayer than when we feel least like it, and have the least inward movings that way. At the Winchester Camp meetings this "forcing things" in regard to religion, as they would term it, they treated with the same aversion that Satan ever treats the cross. The crucifying work of prayer, exhortation, rebuke for sin, when all natural feelings are against it and demand ease and self indulgence, is called forcing. ~~making work, making work, etc. but this is a lie of the devil, and comes from him who hates the cross and the forcing of it, nails and spear into the flesh, and selfish nature to crucify it. Our very life depends on this crucifixion. It is by the cross of duty we are killed out to self and obtain by faith all inward grace. There is no other way. That delusion which waits for inward leadings and feeling just reverses God's order.~~

Christ commands to bear the cross, to die daily. We cannot live without it. It is to force ourselves to prayer and to God when all our leadings are the other way. This will crucify self. Just reverse our inclinations at every point where plain duty requires. Improve sin, when we feel the least like it! Cry aloud and spare not, when it is most crossing and contrary to all inward leadings, governed alone by the sheer evidence of sin, and need of reproof and Bible authority for it. This is taking the cross and following Christ, without which Satan will lead us captive.

God's repeated command to pray warrants prayer at any and all times, especially when we have least feeling and impressions that way. We must force our selves to it or be damned. We must go about it as we would our daily meals; not neglect it oftener. Infinitely better neglect the body than the soul. The reasons for frequent actual prayer are as plain and positive as for our meals; and the evil of intermitting, aside from God's command to pray, is precisely the same in one as the other. It is true the body can bear much fasting, and torture, and irregularity through ignorance or outward necessities; indeed weeks and months have passed in cases of sickness and other cases with astonishingly little food, so precisely the soul often wonderfully endures the same kind of abuse by ignorant or deluded or sin sick mortals. But it is dangerous and fatal to recklessly neglect the cross of prayer, and destroy the soul's appetite for God. By constant regular adherence to the exercise we keep alive our appetite and delight in prayer so that it ceases to be a cross.

The whole duty of life is governed by the same law. What God commands, or makes plain duty in any and every case is to be done without regard to any inward leading or impression whatever, but from simple knowledge of the truth or the right. It would be a poor excuse for a man to say he could not pay an honest debt because he had no feeling or impression that way! Far more miserable would be

such excuse for not engaging in prayer to God at any time and place where there is occasion for it. If a sick man for instance, according to scripture, calls for the Elders of the church to pray with him, (James 5: 14.) and they plead in excuse that they have no impression to pray for him and do not feel like it, I should certainly judge those elders to be either deluded or false. Many times have I tested and exposed imposters by this means. Pretended saints have called at my house, and when in our family worship I have asked them to join with us at prayer they have betrayed themselves by inability to talk with God. I knew that they were strangers to God from the fact that they could not join with us in communion with our Father. They had no excuse whatever. If the heart goes out to God, then it is easy for the lips also to call upon him. That the lips refused, was a demonstration that the heart was closed. For God says "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." All pretence to the contrary is a lie. That the disciples did not ~~wait and pray with Jesus in the garden~~ when he requested them to, was the reason doubtless of their temptation and fall. If one who pretends to love me, will not speak to me, I know his pretense is false, for I know there can be no rational excuse for being dumb towards me, if his heart is full of love.

**And there CAN BE NO EXISTENCE OF ANY LOVE IN THE HEART WITHOUT ITS FREQUENT EXPRESSION OUTWARDLY BY THE LIPS!**

#### GENUINE SPIRIT LEADINGS!

The Bible shows what are the true leadings of the Holy Spirit. Jesus says of it, "He will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to come. He will guide you into all truth, he will show you things to come, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance." He calls it the comforter because it will give life and power, joy and peace to true believers.

There is nothing strange or unreasonable in all this to a child of God. The effect of the Spirit then is not a blind impulse, without reason, or contrary to truth and sound judgment, but just the opposite, it leads to the truth, it dispels the fog of sin, clears up the mind, restores the judgment, exposes fanaticism and all false reasoning, and makes the light of truth and eternal realities shine with noon day splendor! No wonder guilty souls gnash with their teeth, or are prostrated with terror when the Holy Ghost reveals the truth. No wonder God's children are transported with joy unutterable and rend the air with shouts, or fall insensible overpowered by a view of glorious truth!

The spirit also sometimes reveals future events and things which men could not know naturally. It does sometimes operate by dreams and visions. I suppose there has been no change in this since the Bible times, except in the growing unbelief of the professed church.

But mark the scripture examples and teachings, the Spirit of God never sets aside the natural reasoning and judgment of a sanctified soul. Even when we have supernatural revelations we are never to be governed by them contrary to our knowledge of the truth. If an angel from heaven teach any other gospel than that we have received and which the Bible sanctions and our judgment approves, "Let him be accursed." It is never safe to trust any dreams, visions, revelations or impressions contrary to our knowledge of the truth and of God's word.

It is not the spirit of God that sets ones reason aside, and requires us to believe what we cannot understand, nor see the reasonableness of. It is always the spirit from the pit that brings confusion and drives us on a course reckless of truth and of facts which we know.

The Holy Spirit always operates by the truth and by opening our eyes to see the facts, and bases its whole authority on the clear convictions and positive knowledge we have. It enables us to see, whereas we were blind. It shows us realities which our minds can appreciate and understand. This is the beauty and glory of the Holy Spirit leadings in distinction from the incantations of witchcraft, and the marvels of all the strange and absurd ravings of Spiritualism and religious necromancy.

I have seen so much fanaticism of this kind and seen so many whole souled pilgrims lead captive by satan in this direction, and myself once horribly ensnared, that I feel it my duty to warn the pilgrims every where in the words of 1 John 4: 1. "Beloved believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God." How are we to try them? By the word of God, and the knowledge and sanctified

reason he has given us. If we hear a brother or sister say "I am impressed to do this, or to do that" be on your guard, see what spirit it is that impresses them. If they go it blind, by sheer impression without reason or convictions, on good authority, then beware of them. They are doubtless already in Spiritualism lead captive of satan.

If it is the Spirit of God that impresses us, it is always reasonable, accords with the facts, it is supported by scripture; and the time, place, circumstances and all necessities admit of it, the ungodly world cannot gain say it, and the judgment of all God's children also must approve it.

There is no foolishness, inconsistency, mere marvelousness nor setting aside the judgment of the whole church in any leadings of the Holy Spirit.

For example, every act of righteousness, and prayer, of worship toward God, of good to man, exhortation, reproof, teaching which accords with Scripture, and is suited to the facts and circumstances we must accept as of God. But if a person strangely walks around a room waving the hand without any manifest motive, or performs any strange act, without any reason for it, or refrains from plain duty, or begins to condemn brethren by supernatural discerning, contrary to the Scripture rule, or without Bible proof, and claims to be lead of the Spirit we may know that every such person is deluded of the devil, perhaps honestly deceived, but brethren ought to resist such spirit before it infects the church and destroys the work of God.

#### LIBERTY OF THE SPIRIT.

True liberty in gospel worship is freedom to worship God as the conscience requires, and as the Bible approves. If in any meeting I am not free to exhort and pray the whole truth, then I am under the power of the man of sin, and ought to break that power. I can allow no man to shut my mouth from praying and speaking honestly just what God's truth requires under the circumstances. If I do I am false to God, I submit to anti christ. The great evil of all sectarian meetings is that the Spirit of God has no liberty in them. No child of God can tell the whole truth as the Spirit of God reveals it in any sect meeting. Their whole worship is false, and a mockery of God because the truth is shut out. The whole reason why the pharisees were hypocrites was because they were false, they hated and rejected God's truth while they made long prayer. Their praying was a lie because it was a profession of truth which they hated. It was to gain credit for the very religion they rejected. All meetings where there is not perfect liberty for the truth and the Spirit of truth, are false and their worship a mockery of God. But all worship, prayer, preaching, or singing, where there is openness to truth, or honesty before God, are holy and pleasing in his sight. No regular appointment or order of worship which accords with facts, and wants of men and where every one is free to obey God, can be spoken against. This is just what God's word requires.

The difficulty in most modern religious assemblies is that God is systematized out of the meeting. The order of singing and prayer and preaching by one man is such that there is no time or chance for any child of God to say any thing outside of this order. This is what makes it false and a mockery.

#### ORDER IN WORSHIP.

In shunning the dead formalism of hypocrites, there has been an equally false dread and aversion to every kind of regularity and order in religion among brethren, which has resulted in fatal neglect of prayer and all effort for God and righteousness. This was the net satan ensnared the brethren in around Wilechester and Arcola, Ill. Such was the terror inspired against formalism that no one dared to read Scriptures, sing and pray in their meetings in a regular way lest the cry of hypocrisy and pharisaism be raised against them.

We find in the Bible that christians met for worship at appointed times, and were commanded not to neglect such assembling together.

It is impossible for two or three to meet except by agreement at an appointed time. It is impossible for any to pray at all except by appointment, or a set time literally taken and occupied. To pray without ceasing is not meant as some seem to construe it, that the mind is constantly occupied with direct talking with God. This is an impossibility. Neither Jesus nor any man ever prayed without ceasing in this sense. There are countless other duties as needful and obligatory as prayer which take the whole mind and heart during portions of every day. Ministering to bodily wants takes time and every power of the mind. Reproving sin, com-

forting the sorrowful, warning exhorting, teaching takes the whole mind and heart. Love to God is of course the main spring of all we do, yet the mind is not and cannot be engaged actively in more than one duty at a time. Division of time is a simple necessity for both soul and bodily affairs. To pray without ceasing is therefore to continue the seasons of communion with God. The example of Jesus illustrates this as all other duty. He prayed without ceasing in this sense that he addressed God repeatedly when sorrowful, when rejoicing, when doing miracles, when on the cross, when at meals or feeding the multitudes, and by night and by day and alone, and with his disciples and before the world. Daniel prayed with open windows at regular hours.

God commands in Heb. 13: 15 "By him let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips." This is plain and unmistakable. The prayer to be without ceasing or "Continually" is the fruit of our lips as well as the heart. This settles this whole matter. This makes the duty as regular or continuous as our meals. We are to pray without ceasing in the same sense that we are to eat our meals without ceasing. And the life of the soul is just as dependant on as frequent seasons of literal vocal prayer, as the life of the body on the same frequency of eating. To discontinue eating is no more certain death than to discontinue praying. I never have known the discontinuance of literal prayer, without the loss of God's love in the heart.

It is not the regularity of prayer that kills it, but dishonesty and falsehood in its exercise.

To mock God brings sure death. But if we come to God honestly and truly, once or ten times a day, it is not in vain. God meets every such appointment of man's! "Where two three are agreed" in such an appointment Jesus has promised to be present. Whatever arrangement for prayer we make in sincerity in the name of Jesus, all heaven is engaged and God Almighty is pledged to our service. See Matt. 18: 19. Otherwise we make God a liar.

For twenty two years I have not failed of two regular seasons of prayer morning and evening when my family were together. And from infancy every child has been taught and required to pray. God has owned and blessed us in this. Only one son ever refused, and he did so because the devil's children told him he ought not to be controlled in his religion. In consequence the devil got him.

I know now the only security for a family of children is to bring them up to pray. There is no danger of making hypocrites of them unless we are hypocrites ourselves. A hypocrite cannot make his children honest in prayer nor will he be likely to make them pray at all. Although a true saint may have a wayward child as did David and Samuel, yet no hypocrite can ever make a saint of any of his children.

If I had a thousand children I would not allow one to live under my roof without joining us in prayer around the family altar. If I had raised a family without it, and just got converted, I should begin now on this line. And if they were all full grown, we would have a regular break down before God nor rest until prayer reigned in every heart and on every tongue. The house in which I live has got to be a house of prayer! If I have any kindred who cannot endure it they may go. I would force none to pray except my children, over whom God gives me authority. As prayer is a righteous act I would command it, as I would command a child to return stolen property. All the powers of earth and hell cannot successfully oppose the faith in God of a righteous father or mother, till their house is made a house of prayer, and every knee is bowed to God.

When we read and pray in our family, we always make a business of it. We go about it as we do about our regular meals, and with the same convictions, both because we love it, and because we feel the necessity of it. Our daily conflict with an ungodly world makes us especially relish seasons of communion with God, and seek help from him. And this is the secret of God's favor towards us as a family, that we are all united in the faith as no other so large a family of my acquaintance in the world.

The regularity of our seasons of worship has been no hindrance, any more than any regularity of our meals. If we ceased to take the cross daily, our prayers would become dead and false. But the daily cross with the daily prayer is the means of life, joy and peace to our souls; and may my tongue rot from my mouth when it ceases to call on God in vo-



cal prayer! May my ears lose their hearing when I cease to hear the musical voice of earnest prayer. The tongue and ear have no other use in this world. God would destroy them if this use for them were discontinued. I speak what I know and testify what I have seen.

As no dear friend of mine would ever damage the sincerity and blessedness of our communion by the regularity of his visits under my roof. So I have no fear of damaging the joy and glory of my communion with God by the regularity of my visits to his throne of grace with the literal sacrifices of my lips. And yet I can have no system that will exclude any hour or moment that trouble or gratitude may drive me to outward prayer. The only thing that could wean my heart from God would be to silence my tongue, and the powers by which I express my devotion before a godless world. May such powers die first! May I cease to live before the light of my love to God shall cease to shine before men! Matt. 5; 17.

### CARNAL COMMANDMENTS.

"In vain ye do worship me teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." Mark, 7.

Heb. 9, 10 "Which stood only in meats, and drinks and divers baptisms, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come, a high priest, etc. Read also Heb. 7, 8, and 9 chapters; Col. 2, and three verses of the next; and Eph. 2, and Gal. and Romans.

If Jesus meant literal water, John 3, 5, then the thief on the cross perished, and John 6: 63 is also false doctrine.

I am charged with setting aside God's commands and preaching another gospel, by Mr. Whitaker and Hendricks, and their church of God priest in Colton, because I do not preach carnal rites as a condition of salvation. Ans. 1st. Jesus Christ was circumcised and kept the passover and the whole Jewish law, and commanded his disciples to do the same, and to eat the passover in remembrance of him, and said "Whatsoever they (pharisees) teach that observe and do." Feet washing and all baptisms was commanded by the law of Moses; see Exodus 30; 17-21 and Numbers 19, and Luke 7: 38-46.

Therefore all argument for one carnal rite is equally for the whole Jewish ordinances; and my accusers are precisely the ones Paul means in Galatians "Let them be accursed" for seducing the church of whom he says "O foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you—ye are so foolish having begun in the Spirit are ye made perfect in the flesh?"

2 Since God says that all carnal ordinances were fulfilled in Christ, and that all these types in which the old tabernacle stood are abolished, Heb. 8 & 9 Col. 2, 2 Cor. 3. Therefore these men are false and deceivers for making these a condition of salvation.

3 No words of Jesus can be found saying that he has instituted any new rite whatever as a distinction of his church, nor did the disciples so understand it, because of the eight apostles who wrote the New Testament each of whom professes to give the whole gospel and condition of salvation and membership of Christ's church, only one of them mentions feet washing, and he only once. Except only a slight allusion to it as an act of hospitality in Timothy. Only Matthew gives the command to baptize, and he does not say with water. And John who says more about Christ's commands than either other apostle, does not once mention either baptism or the Lord's supper in all his writings as a command.

These facts prove that Christ has made no outward rite obligatory in his church, or else that every one of his chosen witnesses was incompetent, untrustworthy and false, for giving us only part of the gospel, and conditions of salvation!

4 Six times in the New Testament, at the beginning of each gospel and of Acts, and the 11 chap., it is said "John indeed baptized with water, but Christ should baptize with the holy Ghost." For men now to compel believers who have had Christ's baptism, to go back to John and to water for perfection is to deny Christ and teach another gospel.

5 Since God says there is but one Baptism, (see Ephs. 4) and that by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body (1 Cor. 12: 13) And since believers had one baptism without the other, and never had both at once, and six times God declares the water baptism not Christ's baptism, therefore those men who contend for the water baptism are infidels and enemies of God and his Christ. They are contending for an other gospel and God says "Let them be accursed."

6 In all the New Testament men are judged or condemned only for sin, by the law of righteousness and never once for neglect of any outward rite. Not a text in the New Testament condemns one for not observing outward rites. But we are commanded to disfellowship unbelievers, sectarians, and all manner of sinners. Therefore all those are false to God and man who make outward rites a test of character.

God says again; "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, but he is a Jew who is one inwardly." If this was true of the old law, how much more under Christ is one a saint who has only the baptism of Christ, the Holy Ghost.

7 Paul says that he thanked God he did not baptize any, but certain ones, for Christ did not send him to baptize.

Those make out Paul a liar and false apostle who say Christ has commanded to baptize with water and make this a condition of christian character, for Paul's character is to be judged by no different law from all ministers or saints. How plainly Paul did not understand Christ as the false brethren claim Christ commanded. It is impossible to escape this plain scripture. Let God explain his own commands and let us not submit to the commandments of men who want to make merchandize of our souls!

8 The whole design of carnal rites is to give a human priesthood a chance. It makes it necessary for the believer to have a priest to perform the rite for him and thus help him to God. Thus a carnal religion, popery, and the whole money system comes in. But the Bible destroys all principalities and powers by making Christ alone our priest. "Not after the law of a carnal commandment, but the power of an endless life." Heb. 7: 16. So carnal ordinances deny the Bible teaching of Christ's priesthood and makes popery a necessity.

And the whole carnal catholic world fly to baptisms and outward rites when they view death or danger nigh, instead of Jesus alone.

If men truly felt the presence of God and eternal realities they never would talk about carnal ordinances unless they are deluded Papists. When a view of the Judgment and a burning world awakes the soul there can be no thought of any rites, but only to cry for the mighty power of God which alone can save!

And there is no sinner on earth saved by any other means than the thief on the cross, and we have all got to be completely stripped of every other dependence as he was, before Christ will accept or save one of us.

Finally, while I condemn no man for believing in meats and carnal baptisms, and will receive every brother, though he be circumcised, yet I denounce and abhor all those who impose the yoke of their carnal commandments on Christ's freemen, by making these a test of character and condition of salvation; as antichrist, judaizers, sectarians, papists and ministers of Satan.

I can and do conform to others consciences in all matters of indifference. A brother weak in faith, who has a conscience for outward rites we are to receive, but not to doubtful disputations. Rom. 14. But one who denies Christ by making these a condition of salvation and fellowship, "Let him be accursed." Galatians, 1.

### GOD OUT OF DOORS.

THE "PRINCE of this WORLD" ALARMED!

There was considerable consternation caused in our quiet little town the other evening by somewhat loud singing and praying out of doors! One man at least, jumped out of bed, thinking there was a fire or something worse, and a general feeling of alarm surprise, disgust, and displeasure spread every where that the great God should have got out of his appropriate place where the devil has confined him in private houses and sanctuaries, where Satan says men ought to worship the Father, and where worship alone is respectable and tolerable if tied up to set forms and red tape system. The Prince of this world and his subjects claim all out doors, and liberty of voice in its fullest volume, and are supremely disgusted when believers in God venture outside with their tongues untied and hearts unstrapped by dead rules and forms.

It is difficult to tell what further development of public feeling may be made if these innovations on the devil's order are continued. It could hardly produce greater astonishment or consternation or disgust if one of our meeting-houses should take legs and walk up and down the streets, or the dead in the grave yards should rise and go about in grave clothes, than when a child of God begins to pray aloud on the devil's grounds, and turns the great OUT DOORS into a sanctuary of almighty God! Everybody says it is out of place. Shame! Crazy! God has his appropriate time and place, Let his worshippers consider what is respectable, fit, and proper in this world.

But fourth of July is at hand, when the roar of cannon and bands of music, and shouts of idolaters will rend the air and grate the jargon of hell on the ears of saints. This is deemed fit and appropriate because it is to the prince of this world who rules all out of doors. Mirth and revelry, music profanity hurrahs for political demagogues may swell and

roll their fullest volumes of voice in I stand to the bursting of lungs or of guns, and all the world say Amen, and the most fastidious church goers of these synagogues of Satan say amen.

Beloved fellow soldiers of the cross the devil has no rights out doors. The voice of prayer alone has a right. Let us advance on the enemies bulwarks and assert the rights of God!

Our beloved brother John V. Beyer of Whitehall Ill. has been spending a few days with us greatly to our profit.

We have many letters from brethren which I would be glad to print if I had room.

Brother J. J. Woodruff of Colton O. was recently expelled from the "Church of God," as I learn, for saying in a public meeting that he endorsed the Stumblingsone so far as he had read it. But God's Church of God is a very different institution from man's church of God which is a lie, and does not include all God's true children, and hence in fact is the devil's church of God.

Brother A. Ewing of Vineland N. J. is a faithful brother, and is a distributor of gospel tracts and papers.

### The Methodist Infidel Ministry.

The M. pastor of this place preaching from the text "Thou shalt not conform to this world" Rom. 12 said that this scripture was not applicable now, and labored through his sermon, to prove this assumption.

Again he preached from the text "Jesus has not changed, day today and forever." Taught that Jesus had not changed, indeed, but preaching was changed and must of necessity change and adapt itself to society and to the age. This I have from a credible hearer.

This is only a specimen of the modern Methodist ministry. If they had the honesty of Tom Paine to tell squarely their total dissent from the "Old Book," and did not seek to gull the people with pretended orthodoxy for their money, they at least would be deserving of all the respect due to God's open and manly enemies, and would not do any thing like the harm to souls that they are now doing.

### Modern Sabbath Schools.

To send children to Sabbath schools with their ideas of the Bible are drawn from teachers who have no experience of saving truth, and testing teachers, novels, pictures, entertaining talk and singing, while they are taught to mock God with praise while their hearts are full of sin and vanity, is worse by far than even the public schools of this world. It is to train them in hypocrisy and infidelity. It is worse than Israel did who burned their children to Baal.

### PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Bible Christians who are commanded to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord can not and should not send their children to public schools where they will have the nurture of worldly minded teachers, and ungodly schoolmates.

The companionship of children with the spirit of young America, disobedient, profane, proud, and reckless must be prohibited if we would obey God and save our offspring. We must educate our children only with godly teachers and companions, or else pray God to take them home.

It would be better to throw them to the crocodiles in the Ganges, than school them to the devil, by ungodly teachers and companions.

Letters continued from first page.

of us, one would think we were the only sinners in all this region, just because we reprove sin. And by the grace of God I will do it if my life pays the forfeit. We are hated and despised and persecuted and all manner of evil said of us.

Most of those who have gone from us were blessed of the Holy Ghost and saved, but came to something that needed to be purged in order to be a vessel unto honor, and they could not stand the process. The chance of souls getting saved in these days is very small, the cross is so great, they cannot pay the price. The power of opposition to Bible holiness is on the increase continually. It does seem that it will be long when every one who will be a Bible Christian will have to face death. For one I expect to end this war down by the river.

As it was in the days of Lot so it will be in the coming of the son of man. Two angels coming into Sodom set the city on fire. We are learning the more fully we become crucified to our natures, the more able we are to stand against earth and hell, and overcome them through the blood of the Lamb. We shall be more than glad to see you when God moves you to come and see us. From a sister in the warfare inclosed find for your present necessities from the Lord.

Mary X. Blatchley.

Canning, Nova Scotia, May 8th 1875.

Brother Lyman H. Johnson. Will please find enclosed if Satan does not steal it before it reaches him. I am much pleased with what you say about prayer in the April No. It is now 27 years since salvation came to my soul in this very room where I now write, and I have been proving what is acceptable unto the spirit ever since, and must now say that false brethren have been my worst trial. Nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me whom I serve with my spirit.

Lawrence, Kansas, April 13 1875.

Dear brother in Christ. I have read all the Stumblingsone except one for forty years, and can only say that I have received more light and knowledge of the Bible than by all the sermons I ever heard.

Blessed be God and the Lamb Jesus is mine and I am his. I am happy, happy in Jesus alone. Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh the arm of flesh his trust, whose heart departeth from the Lord. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord and whose hope is in the Lord. Jeremiah 17: 5.

I am glad that the enemies of our Lord have not been able to silence you. Hold fast the faith. We are living in most awful times of overflowing wickedness. Both preachers and people are all in a fallen condition.

The Lord has punished the people with scarcity of food, and yet they are proud. Bless the Lord I live on the promises. Thy bread shall be given thee and thy water shall not fail. Dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed and in time of famine thou shalt have enough. A. W. Maberly.